



# *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

## *Syllabus*

### *Public Opinion - 56799*

*Last update 25-10-2022*

*HU Credits: 2*

*Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)*

*Responsible Department: Political Science*

*Academic year: 0*

*Semester: 1st Semester*

*Teaching Languages: Hebrew*

*Campus: Mt. Scopus*

*Course/Module Coordinator: Prof. Lilach Nir*

*Coordinator Email: [lnir@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:lnir@mail.huji.ac.il)*

*Coordinator Office Hours: zoom/ by email*

*Teaching Staff:*

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Prof Lilach Nir

Course/Module description:

NOTE: \* In 2022/3: online only, NO zoom \*

*Does media coverage of poverty and violence affect citizens' perceptions of the government responsibility for creating social problems, and its responsibility for solving these problems? How does information reported in the public domain influence how the public views the functioning of elected officials and support for policies? The scientific study of public opinion from the 20th century onwards is based, implicitly or explicitly, on the information environment in which individuals' and group opinions are created, formulated and expressed in the public sphere. In this course, I first review the historical roots of studying audiences and opinions. Then, I elaborate on the theoretical schools in the research literature using examples from different countries. By the end of the course, students will be able to define concepts such as false consensus, identify various scientific approaches to the study of public opinion, to compare them and demonstrate how to apply them to a case study in public opinion.*

Course/Module aims:

*Aims: In this course, I first review the highlights and arguments in public opinion research. Then, I elaborate on the theoretical schools in the research literature using examples from different countries.*

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

*Outcomes: By the end of the course, students will be able to define concepts such as false consensus, identify various scientific approaches to the study of public opinion, to compare them and demonstrate how to apply them to a case study in public opinion. In addition,*

- Give examples from current events to describe theoretical phenomena in public opinion*
- Construct an argument in favor/against a position, based on the relevant literature*

Attendance requirements(%):

*Course taught exclusively online, pre-recorded lectures and weekly assignments. To receive the full attendance grade, complete by the due date and hour of that week.*

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*Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Pre-recorded lectures, weekly assignments and self-quizzes*

*Course/Module Content:*

*I. Background introduction*

- Opinions and publics*
- Impersonal influence*
- Ambivalence and floating voters*

*II. Perceptual Biases*

- False consensus*
- Pluralistic ignorance*
- Third-person effect*
- Hostile media effect*

*III. Public Opinion and Democracy*

- Framing and elite competition*
- Opinion quality: knowledge, civility*
- Fragmentation and polarization*
- Course wrap*

*Required Reading:*

*Required reading:*

- \* Public opinion theory and empirical verification of these theoretical arguments.*
- \* Each week, along the required reading,*

*Additional Reading Material:*

*Additional reading:*

- \* Will appear in the moodle/syllabus; intended for those who wish to expand their knowledge in that substantive area.*

*Grading Scheme:*

*Additional information:*

- \* Additional info/ comments: The final version will appear in moodle at the beginning of the semester.*

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*Grading:*

*% 30 final assignment*

*% 60 three assignments*

*% 10 weekly online participation*